

“Marin Marais: A Life’s Work”

Program

Pièces de violes 1^{er} livre – Paris 1686 (suite in d minor)

Prelude
Gigue
Sarabande*
Rondeau
Menuet*

Pièces de violes 2^o livre – Paris 1701

Tombeau po'. Mr de Ste Colombe

Pièces de violes 5^e livre – Paris 1725 (suite in a minor)

Rondeau
La Marieé
Sarabande
Grande Gavotte
Rondeau

Pièces de violes 4^e livre – Paris 1717 (suite in d minor)

Prelude
Allemande
Caprice
Menuet
Gigue*

Pièces de violes 3^e livre – Paris 1711 (suite in a minor)

Prelude
Allemande
Courante*
Sarabande
Grand Ballet*



“Marin Marais: A Life’s Work”

Directed by Jennifer Eriksson

Concert 1

Sunday 30 July 2000
3.00 pm

John Barnard & Fiona Garlick ~ baroque dance

Jennifer Eriksson ~ viola da gamba

Catherine Tabrett ~ viola da gamba continuo

Monika Kornel ~ harpsichord

St Scholastica’s Chapel
2 Arcadia Rd
Glebe



NB * denotes pieces danced

Choreography by Fiona Garlick after Louis-Guillaume Pécour (c.1704) and Pierre Rameau (1725)

Costumes – The Early Dance Consort

A Life's Work

Who was Marin Marais and what is his legacy to French Baroque music and, in particular, to the viola da gamba? Over the coming months and years I will be giving a series of performances exploring just this question! This is the fulfilment of my 20-year dream to pay homage to Marais, the greatest of viol composers.

Marais' life (1656-1728) spanned a good portion of the mid-Baroque period. The full breadth of his genius is revealed in the five-volume work, "Pièces de Violes" which contains more than 600 individual pieces. Over the next years I hope that we will be able to perform the majority of these works. In general, viol players have tended to focus on the popular suites such as the "La Folia" from Book II, "Grand Ballet" from Book III, or "Suite du' un goût Estrange" from Book IV, yet there are many other wonderful suites that remain largely unexplored in performance.

Why a Marin Marais Project?

In the year of the Sydney Olympics with all the emphasis on athletic achievement, I wanted to set myself a significant challenge. Eventually, I came up with the idea of establishing the Marais Project, an ongoing series of concerts that would promote the viola da gamba and its music, and extend my own technique and artistic stamina. In making this choice, Gerard Willems' recent example in recording the complete Beethoven sonatas, and Philip Swanton's performance of all the Haydn keyboard sonatas, have been inspirational. The focus of my solo work in the last ten years has been the French baroque repertoire, as to me, this is the music that goes to the very heart of the instrument. Musically speaking, Marais is to me, the most gifted viol composer of this era. In this sense, Marais' five volumes also serve to chart the enormous changes in French instrumental music between 1686 when the first volume was published, and 1725 when the fifth and final book went to press.

In this opening concert I will be playing pieces from all of the five books. I have selected these works so as to demonstrate the shift away from the old style of the French suite that consisted of a fairly standard sequence of dances - allemande, courante, gigue, menuet, gavotte and rondo - proceeded by a prelude, to the Italian style. This shift can be seen as early as Book II in the series of variations on the famous "La Folia" melody from Spain. In the Grand Ballet (Book III) the influence of the flamboyant Italian style is definitely present. I have deliberately chosen the first suites from Books I, III, IV and V so the audience hear the clear progression in Marais' musical language.

No concert of French viol music would be complete without a performance of one of the Tombeaux. It seemed fitting in the opening concert of the Project to include "Tombeau po'. Mr. de S.te Colombe", a piece reflecting the life and time of Mr Ste Colombe, Marais' teacher. S.te Colombe was also responsible for adding the seventh string to the gamba, enabling Marais, and after him, Forqueray, to take the instrument on to even greater heights.

How will I sustain the Project?

When one thinks about it, playing French Baroque gamba music is a fairly obscure thing to do under the harsh 21st century Australian sun! To keep up the artistic momentum I am attempting to be as imaginative as possible through using different art forms to assist in bringing the audience closer to the composer and his times. For example, in today's concert I will be joined by Fiona Garlick and John Barnard from the Early Dance Consort. In addition, at other points in the Project I will explore the music of Marais' contemporaries such as Forqueray.

I am sure that when Jordi Savall, the great Catalan gamba player, commenced his involvement with the soundtrack of the cult French film "Tous les matins du monde" (All the Mornings of the World) he had no idea how many people would become entranced with the gamba as a result. In a lesser way, it is my hope that through this Project many more Australians will also come to know and love the music of the viola da gamba and thereby enter into its rich, beautiful and soulful world.

Jennifer Eriksson

Jennifer Eriksson completed her initial musical studies at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music studying cello with Barbara Woolley. In 1985 she left Australia to study the viola da gamba with Jaap ter Linden at the Rotterdam Conservatorium where she completed post-graduate studies in baroque music. Whilst in Europe she performed regularly in Holland and Germany including a guest appearance at the Utrecht Festival.

Since returning to Australia in 1988 Jennifer has performed as a soloist with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Victorian State Opera Orchestra and Salùt. She is highly sort after as a continuo player and has appeared with the Australian Opera, the Renaissance Players, the Early Dance Consort, the Sydney Consort, The Musicke and numerous other ensembles. Jennifer has also performed in regular live broadcasts for the ABC and tours for Musica Viva in the ensemble "Sounds Baroque".

Fiona Garlick & John Barnard are founding members of The Early Dance Consort, a teaching and performing ensemble embracing European court dance from the early Renaissance to the Classical era. Fiona and John have appeared with the Australia Ensemble, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Capella Corelli, Musica da Camera, the Elysium Ensemble, Ensemble of the Golden Age, The Musicke, Pastance, and The Renaissance Players.

Artistic Director, Fiona Garlick, is recognised as a leading Australian authority on early European dance, and holds a Ph.D. in French Court dance under Louis XIV. She has a special expertise in the reconstruction of dances recorded in notation from the late 17th and early 18th century, as well as considerable experience in period choreography, gesture and movement for the stage. Co-director John Barnard partners and assists Fiona both in performance and in the Consort's pedagogical activities.

Monika Kornel studied piano in Poland where she received her Diploma from the Conservatorium of Music, later performing concertos by Bach and Rachmaninov with Polish Orchestras in the 1980s. After furthering her studies at the Academy of Music in Lodz, she completed a Bachelor of Music degree at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music.

Here she broadened her keyboard studies to include the harpsichord, taking lessons with Paul Dyer and Raymond Harvey. In 1995 she participated in master classes with Robert Wooley in London and Bob van Asperen in Amsterdam. In December of that year she was invited to perform the harpsichord concertos of J.S. Bach with several established chamber orchestras in Poland.

Monika performs regularly as a soloist and chamber music artist with a number of well known ensembles including the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra of St Laurence, and appeared at the recent Bach Festival. She has also completing a Master of Music in performance with Paul Dyer at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Catherine Tabrett commenced studying cello with Dorothy Sumner and subsequently, Georg Pedersen, obtaining her AmusA in 1990. As a member of the SBS Youth Orchestra she toured Europe, Taiwan and the Pacific and participated in several recordings for SBS Television.

Catherine completed her Bachelor of Music (honours) at Sydney University in 1997, performing the Saint-Saëns' cello concerto no.1 with the Sydney University Orchestra. She has also made several chamber music recordings for 2MBS FM and ABC FM.

During this period, Catherine commenced learning the viola da gamba with Jennifer Eriksson. She has since performed on the instrument in several ensembles including The Renaissance Players, the Conservatorium Baroque Orchestra, Salùt, The Sydney Consort and Sarabande.

**Next Concert: Sunday, October 29, 3.00pm ~ St Scholastica's Chapel ~ 2 Arcadia Rd, Glebe
Featuring music from Marais' Book I, including duets for two viola da gambas. Ph: 9809 5185**